G.A.R.

THE SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR

S.U.V.C.W.

THE CLARION CALL

Newsletter of the Department of Massachusetts

1866 VOLUME No. 4 ISSUE No. 1 June 2004 1881

New Law Passed Protecting Veterans Grave Markers and Flags

By William T. Ryerson, PDC, Dept. Sec.

Boston, MA: After a great deal of effort on the part of Members of the Department and Veteran-friendly legislators in State government, a new law was finally passed in May, which forbids the removal of any, "...veteran's grave marker or metal plaque, veteran's flag holder that commemorates a particular war, conflict or period of service or flag…". *(Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 272, Section 73)*

The efforts began in August of 2002, when Veterans in the Westfield area discovered that St. Mary's Cemetery, a private cemetery owned by the Springfield Diocese, had removed flags and flag holders from Veterans' graves during the course of their maintenance of the grounds.

The cemetery management claimed that, as St. Mary's is a private cemetery, the existing State law did not apply to their management of it. A legal battle ensued in Hampden Superior Court, and the cemetery was able to continue removing the markers through the use of a loop hole which they claimed existed in state law regarding such activity.

On September 15, 2002, at a Department meeting of the SUVCW, held at Sturbridge, MA, it was voted that the Department Secretary should contact the State's Attorney General's office and request a ruling as to whether the removal of flags and markers from Veterans' graves was legal under Massachusetts law. Department Secretary Bill Ryerson contacted Massachusetts Representative Paul Casey, who made the request for a ruling from the Attorney General, on behalf of the Department. The Attorney General declined to rule on the matter, stating that a ruling by him was not proper, due to the court action or appeals which were pending.

Frustrated but not defeated, Representative Casey suggested new legislation which would contain precise language protecting flags and flag holders. He then drafted the bill and submitted it as House Bill 2390. The Westfield Veterans and other groups also contacted their legislators, who filed similar bills.

After more than a year of hearings, in which the related bills were discussed and differences reconciled, H 2390 became the bill that survived and finally passed in the House of Representatives.

Upon the passing of the bill in the House, Representative Casey contacted Secretary Ryerson, and suggested that, in order to avoid the long delays that the bill went through in the House, he should contact Senator Charles Shannon with a request that he sponsor the bill in the Senate. Secretary Ryerson contacted Senator Shannon and, on behalf of the organization, asked for his support, which was most graciously given. Due to Senator Shannon's influence the bill was quickly passed by the Senate.

H 2390 then went to the Governor's office for his approval, and was signed into law by Governor Romney in a ceremony at the State House "Hall of Flags", on Friday May 28, 2004.

The SUVCW owes Representative Paul Casey, Senator Charles Shannon, and Governor Mitt Romney a debt of gratitude for their efforts in protecting and honoring Veterans and Veterans' graves.

Gov. Mitt Romney signs H2390 into law.

Contact the Editor at: THE CLARION CALL 20 Howland Terrace, Worcester, MA 01602 Email: rrodriguez@worcester.edu

Department Participates In Annual Memorial Day Ceremonies At Bourne National Cemetery

By William T. Ryerson, Dept. Sec., PDC

Bourne, MA: SUVCW Members from across the State gathered on Cape Cod to honor all Veterans as part of the annual Memorial Day observance at the Veterans Administration National Cemetery in Bourne, MA. This year, the event was held on May 23, 2004, a week earlier than normal, in order to allow area Veterans to attend the World War II Memorial Dedication in Washington, D.C. on Memorial Day weekend.

The combined event by the Department of Massachusetts SUVCW and the Mass. 11th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry was a great success with over two dozen participants in Civil War uniform. Ceremonies began with a parade into the cemetery by the various Veterans groups, joined by the SUV/11th Mass. combined marching unit, which was among the largest present. The unit was led by Department Junior Vice Commander Kevin Tucker. Frank Tucker, Commanding Officer of the 11th Mass. and a Member of Camp 104, read General Logan's Order Number 11, designating the first Memorial Day (Decoration Day) in 1868, to the large crowd which gathers annually to honor America's Veterans. Department Commander John Bates placed a wreath on the Veterans Memorial, on behalf of the Department of Massachusetts.

Following the wreath laying ceremony, the SUV/11th Mass. combined unit held its annual observance at the grave of the Unknown Massachusetts Civil War Soldier. The ceremony was conducted by Colonel Tucker, with the wreath laying and presentation of flowers by Department of Massachusetts Officers. The firing squad performed a three volley salute and bugler Ian McCarthy of Camp 104 played "Taps" to close the solemn event.

At the conclusion of ceremonies at the cemetery, the group was among the guests at a luncheon provided by the Aptuxet V.F.W., at their nearby Post. Commander John Bates wishes to thank all Members of the Department and the 11th Massachusetts Infantry who participated.

Department of Massachusetts Holds 122nd Annual Encampment At Historic Milford GAR Hall

By Reynaldo Rodriguez

Members raise a 34-star American flag to open the 122nd Annual Department of Massachusetts Encampment. The flag was presented by the Department to the Milford GAR Memorial Hall as a gift.

Milford, MA: On April 23, 24, and 25, 2004, the 122nd Department of Massachusetts Encampment was held in the recently restored G.A.R. Memorial Hall in Milford, MA.

The Encampment began with a guided tour of the Hall, which features a fantastic Civil War/GAR museum on the first floor, and a spectacular granite staircase, each step engraved with the name of a Civil War battle.

Frank Tucker of Camp 104 salutes US flag at the opening of the 122nd Department Encampment.

Special Guests

On Saturday, the Encampment was opened with the raising of a 34-star American flag, a gift to the Milford GAR Memorial Hall by the Department of Massachusetts. Honored guests included National Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief Stephen A. Michaels and National Secretary Edward J. Kreiser.

National Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief Stephen A. Michaels and National Secretary Edward Kreiser are presented to the Encampment.

Business

The business session was conducted in the grand hall, as it had been by the members of the G.A.R. , many years before. In addition to budgetary and policy matters, the following two items were passed at the business sessions: An award was announced to be named in honor of the late Roger Olsen, PDC, which will be presented to the Member who is judged most outstanding during the coming year. Also, with an eye toward recruitment, the Department will begin presenting ROTC awards to graduates at ceremonies throughout the state.

Elections

The Election and Installation of Department Officers took place in the afternoon. Newly elected Department Commander John W. Bates, III had the honor of being installed by National Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief Stephen A. Michaels.

National Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief Stephen A. Michaels pins the badge of office on newly installed Department Commander John W. Bates, III.

Banquet

On Saturday evening, members were joined by their family, friends, and some additional special guests, for the annual Encampment Banquet. Joining SVCinC Michaels and NSec. Kreiser as honored guests were Department of Massachusetts Auxiliary President Barbara Mayberry, Pat Olsen, (widow of PDC Roger Olsen) 102 Year-old Member Clifton Gaunt, and several Officers of the Department of Massachusetts Auxiliary to the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.

Clifford Gaunt of A.AS. herman Camp #18 (age 102) received a special presentation from PDC Robert H. Knight.

Recognition

At the banquet, several Camps received special recognition: The L.A. Tift Camp No. 15 and Gen. Hartsuff Camp No. 50 each received citations from the Commander-in-Chief for achieving 100 years of continuous service. NSVCinC Michaels also noted that the Willie Grout Camp No. 25 had reached 110 years of service. Also celebrating its 100th anniversary earlier this year was the Charles H. Bond Camp No. 104.

102!

A.A. Sherman Camp No. 18's Clifton Gaunt received a special *Continued*

122nd Department of Massachusetts Encampment

Master of Ceremonies Frank Tucker of Camp 104 presents PDC and current Department Secretary Maj. Edward Parks, USA (Retired) with a coin honoring him as an ex-POW.

Continued recognition, as he recently celebrated his 102nd birthday. Departing Commander Robert H. Knight presented beautifully framed photographs of Abraham Lincoln to the Hall's curator, as well as a presentation to Domenic D'Allessandro, the man responsible for the restoration of the Milford GAR Memorial Hall. PDC Knight also presented a beautiful brief case to Chaplin Emeritus Gage Hotaling, for the years of great service he has rendered to the Department.

Robert H. Knight, PDC., presents an Award of Recognition to Pat Olsen, for her devotion to her husband, the late PDC Roger Olsen, and his causes.

Closing Ceremony

On Sunday, members of the Department joined the 25th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment for a march from the Milford GAR Memorial Hall to the Milford Common, where a ceremony was held to honor General William Draper, at the monument erected to him by the GAR. There, the regiment paid tribute to the general and statesman, who organized and led many of the local residents of Milford and surrounding areas during the Civil War. A three volley salute was fired to conclude the memorial service, and the 122nd Annual Department Encampment came to a close.

The 122nd Annual Department of Massachusetts Encampment was closed with a march and memorial service honoring General William Draper, held on Milford Common, the site of a statue to the distinguished general and statesman.

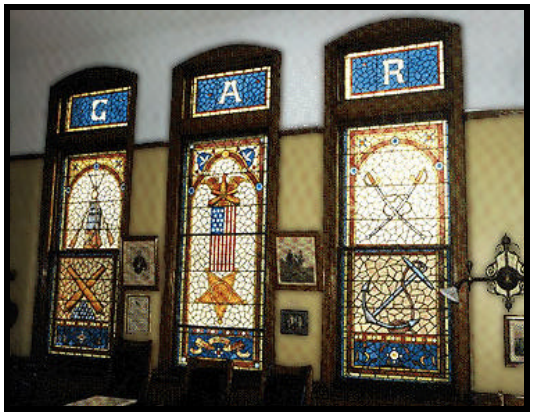
Plans Being Made For Next Year

Frank Tucker has been appointed by the Department Commander John W. Bates as the Chairman for the 123rd Encampment Committee. Members are asked to please make themselves available to volunteer for related committees, in order to make next year's Encampment an even greater success.

Enfield, CT Honors PDC Roger Olsen: On April 30, 2004, a Red Oak tree was planted in memory of PDC Roger L. Olsen, by the Enfield Conservation Committee, outside the Town Hall. The late Brother Olsen was a Department Commander of both Massachusetts and Connecticut.

The New England Civil War Museum: Vernon, Connecticut is home to the New England Civil War Museum. Located in a former G.A.R. hall, the museum displays a fine collection of artifacts, pictures, paintings, badges and uniforms from the Civil War.

Vernon Town Hall, Second Floor
14 Park Place
Vernon, Connecticut
Phone: (860) 870-3563



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A Salute to the Past

Dedication of the National World War II Memorial
Washington, DC, May 29, 2004

By Frank J. Tucker, Camp 104

Washington, D.C.: A Memorial Day weekend that will live in perpetuity. It started with hundreds of buses, thousands of motorcycles, millions of tourists and hundreds of thousands of aging Veterans of World War II. Hotels were booked to capacity in a mind boggling invasion on our nation's Capital, to dedicate the WWII Veteran's Memorial, finally completed after a sixty year wait to salute the services and sacrifices of "America's greatest generation", as Tom Brokaw described them.

On and on they came, aged, walking with halting tread, seated in wheelchairs, hobbling on canes and crutches, thousands of octogenarians, heading for Washington Mall to see what grateful Americans have created for them. Many were fortunate enough to be, once again, united with their wartime comrades. Many kissed, saluted, were interviewed and had their hands squeezed by Americans who revered their presence.

National World War II Memorial, Washington, DC

Although the President of the United States, George W. Bush, was present to pay them homage, as were two former Presidents, George H. W. Bush and William J. Clinton, along with members of Congress and candidates for office were mingling in the dedication area, it was not a day for politics. It was a closing of ranks to give a final salute to those who were leaving our outstretched loving arms at the rate of a thousand a day.

They were not forgotten by celebrities such as Tom Hanks, Connie Stevens, Huge O'Brien, and Tony Curtis. They reminisced and laughed at the stories related by their war hero comrade former Senator Bob Dole, himself badly wounded while serving with the 10th Mountain Division in Europe.

Sprinkled among the 250,000 veterans seated on the mall grass, were those who were recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor, along with others wearing medals of distinction for valor. Yes, these were the remnants of the sixteen million Americans that donned the uniform of their country in its time of stress. The end result of their efforts were 671,000 wounded, over 400,000 killed, and a world released from tyranny.

World War II produced 464 Medal of Honor recipients, and sadly, counting the civilian victims, left us with 50,000,000 dead.

May 29, 2004 was a day that will be remembered so long as Americans never forget this great "Band of Brothers' who, through their sacrifices and deaths, brought forth a rebirth of patriotism, the like of which has never been reproduced by any other nation on Earth.

I was there, standing proudly with them as the National Anthem played its closing stanza as the U.S. Air Force flew overhead in a final salute, and received the plaudits of our Commander in Chief, President George W. Bush.

Be Active!

Challenge to Attend Camp Meetings

by Dept. SVC Perley Mellor

Active membership is the key to the success of every SUVCW Camp. To this end, one must be a Member before they can get active. Every current Brother should always be prepared to assist another in becoming a Member. This is something that holds true, whether you are part of the SUVCW or Auxiliary. Everyone is an important piece of the puzzle, and the puzzle is never complete if any one piece is missing. The Department of Mass. is no exception to this. We have a great Department and, if we all work together, we can make it even better. The first step is to get more people active.

As I see it, there are two ways to do this: The first step is to get a prospect to join the SUVCW for the first time, or maybe transfer from another Department, and become active. The second way is to convince a current member who is not active, to become active. This can mean something as simple as going to a monthly Camp meeting, or maybe helping our at an SUVCW sponsored event.

Every member has the right, and I believe, the obligation, to attend as many meetings as possible. I challenge every member of this Department who has seldom or never attended a Camp meeting, to come to a few meetings this year. You don't have to participate in discussions, if you don't wish to. Just come and listen. See how meetings are conducted, and you'll find that we are all the same people in these meetings as we are outside of the meetings. There is nothing magical or mysterious about these meetings. We are all just trying to do the best we can, and we can use all the help we can get. Come be active!

NEW CIVIL WAR MONUMENT AND MARKER BEING PLANNED

The Town of Erving, Massachusetts is planning to raise $15,000 to erect its first Civil War monument. A dedication is being planned for Memorial Day 2005.

In the City of Worcester, the Central Massachusetts Civil War Round Table is raising funds to erect a marker. The CWRT hopes to raise $4,000.00, to mark the location of a training site used by several Worcester County regiments. The location is adjacent Elm Park, a few miles from the center of the city. A dedication date has not been set.

The following units trained at what was originally called Camp Lincoln then later Camp Wool: 21st 25th, 34th, 36th, 42nd, 51st and 57th MA.

For further information or to make a donation, contact Central Massachusetts Civil War Round Table President John Balco, 207 Green Road Bolton, MA 01740. Phone 978-779-2259

IDENTIFYING CIVIL WAR MONUMENTS AND GRAVES

Identifying Civil War monuments and graves sometimes takes a bit of detective work. Here are some helpful hints: When you first enter a cemetery, scan the area for large monuments. Civil War and GAR monuments vary in size, and some may have a cannon immediately around it. Usually, the monuments are surrounded by numerous military headstones. Some monuments might have a star-shaped or round flag holder next to them. The monument itself will usually indicate "1861-1865" or have the year of dedication engraved on it. Some Civil War monuments are obelisk-shaped, others are topped with cannon balls, bald eagles, a Union soldier, or even Roman or Greek figures. As for headstones of Civil War Veterans, many government stones are rounded, with a shield engraved on the front. There are flat stones as well, (along with stones that have been toppled over and are now lying flat). When looking at the stone, the rank of Private was usually not displayed. Dates of birth and death are not typically noted on these stones. If rank is indicated, it will generally be displayed above the Veteran's name. The Veteran's unit is normally indicated below his name. Modern or replaced stones may have birth and death dates on them. Finally, as a helpful reminder, do not assume a grave belongs to a Civil War Veteran simply by the flag holder. Many flag holders get moved around by cemetery groundskeepers. So, be observant the next time you are in a cemetery and GOOD LUCK!

SHOW YOUR TRUE COLORS!

SONS OF UNION VETERANS
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suvcw.org

S.U.V.C.W. BUMPER STICKERS ARE NOW AVAILABLE

ALL PROCEEDS WILL BE USED TO REPLACE MISSING OR DAMAGED GRAVE MARKERS THROUGHOUT THE STATE.

The 13" x 3.5" S.U.V.C.W. Bumper Sticker are $3.00 each plus postage:

Postage: 1 OR 2 bumper stickers: $.50 3 to 6: $.60 7 to 11: $.85 12 to 15: $1.10

Send Only a Check or Money Order,
Payable to
"The Dept. of Mass, S.U.V.C.W."
Mail your order to:
Kevin Tucker, DJVC
Dept. of Mass. S.U.V.C.W.
58 Forest Street
Wakefield, MA 01880

Major General George L. Hartsuff

George Lucas Hartsuff was born on May 28,1830 in Tyre, Seneca County New York. When he was a child his parents moved the family to Michigan and he entered the United States Military Academy from that state, graduating in 1852. He was assigned to the 4th Artillery, and served in Texas and in Florida.

On one expedition in Florida, his party of ten was attacked by some fourty Seminole Indians. One of only two soldiers who survived, he was badly wounded by a rifle ball in his chest. The ball was never removed.

George Hartsuff was a born leader. Once, while traveling aboard the steamer, "The Lady Elgin", the boat began to sink. Hartsuff was the last passenger on board, after assisting others to safety.

He was appointed instructor in artillery and infantry tactics at the United States Military Academy in 1856. He was assistant Adjutant-General, with the rank of captain when the Civil War broke out in 1861. He rose rapidly through the ranks and became a Brigadier-General of Volunteers on April, 15th, 1862, soon afterward taking charge of Abercrombie's Brigade, which he commanded at Cedar Mountain and Antietam, where he was severely wounded. He took a shell fragment in his chest. During the war he also contracted ulcers.

He was appointed Major-General of Volunteers on November, 29th, 1862, and served as a member of the board to revise rules and articles of war, and to prepare a code for the government of the armies in the field. In April of 1863, was ordered to Kentucky, where he was assigned to command the 23d corps. He was appointed Lieutenant-Colonel and Assistant Adjutant-General, United States Army on June 1, 1864, and was in command of works in the Siege of Petersburg in March and April, 1865. He was brevetted Brigadier-General and Major-General, United States Army in March of 1865.

After the war he was Adjutant-General of the 5th Military Division, comprising Louisiana and Texas, in 1867 and 1868, and of the Division of the Missouri from 1869 until 1871, when he was retired for disability from wounds received in battle. On May 16,1874 at the age of 44, he passed away.

The 12th Mass. Vol.Infantry, which he commanded at Antietam, included many men from East Abington (now Rockland). G.A.R. Post #74, as well as SUVCW Camp #50 were named in his honor.

William Tabor CAMP 162 Re-Organized

Methuen, MA: On March 15, 2004, D.C. Robert H. Knight along with D.S.V.C. John Bates, D.J.V.C. Kevin Tucker, Dept. Secretary William Ryerson, PDC, Camp 129 Commander Douglas Jenkins, Camp 15 Secretary Stephen Twining and Camp 25 SVC George Maple, traveled to Methuen to conduct a re-organization meeting with Members of Camp 162.

DC Knight led the meeting with a discussion regarding the suspension of Camp 162. The Camp was suspended due to its failure to send required reports in to the Department. The former Camp Commander was removed from office by Commander-in-Chief Kent Armstrong. DC Knight assured those in attendance that the suspension would be lifted, as soon as the Camp complied with the filing of a required annual report, together with its per capita payments and an accurate roster, with the Department Secretary.

Left to right: Then DSVC John Bates, Camp 162 CC Kevin LaBarge, DC Robert Knight, and DJVC Kevin Tucker at the reorganization meeting of Camp 162

Immediately following the meeting, Camp 162 held an election, and officially installed some of its newest members, whose entry into the organization was viewed as illegal because the Camp was under suspension at the time of their application. New Camp Officers include: Camp Commander Kevin P. LaBarge, Senior Vice Commander Thomas King, Junior Vice Commander Thomas Hillary and Treasurer Henry N. McCarl. No members present were able to accept the position of Camp Secretary, and therefore, Department Secretary William T. Ryerson volunteered to act as temporary Secretary.

The National Civil War Museum: If you are planning a vacation and want to learn more about the Civil War, check out the National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. You can find out more information at www.nationalcivilwarmuseum.org or call 717-260-1861 or (toll free) 1-886-BLU-GRAY

William S. Tabor was born on June 2, 1843 in Methuen, Massachusetts and lived in Hampstead, New Hampshire. He was one of the few and very brave men to receive our Nation's greatest honor "The Congressional Medal of Honor"

TIMELESS WISDOM

Submitted by Alan Keeler, A.A. Sherman Camp No,18

"We have been the recipients of the, choicest bounties of Heaven; we have grown in numbers, wealth and power as has no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grave, too proud to pray to the God that made us" —— Abe Lincoln

Worcester, MA: On February 12, 2004, Willie Grout CAMP 25 celebrated its 110th Anniversary

Join the Grave Registration Task Force!

Massachusetts: Throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, a team of dedicated Sons of Union Veterans have been recording the final resting places of Massachusetts Civil War Veterans. These brothers of the Order have truly worked hard to perpetuate the memories of the G.A.R. members who rest up in the "Great Encampment in the sky". The grave registration task force can be found in cemeteries, as well as libraries and town halls, recording and researching the lives of those veterans.

Grave registrations serve two great purposes within our order. First, it is the duty of the Sons of Union Veterans to care for the graves of those Civil War Veterans who committed the ultimate sacrifices in their lifetime. By recording their locations as well as their personal histories, they are NEVER FORGOTTEN. Second, the data gleaned from this research can be used as a recruiting tool. By knowing where all the comrades of the G.A.R. are located, potential members can be found. By assisting others in finding their ancestors, we are also strengthening the Sons of Union Veterans.

All Sons should be proud of the work of those registering the graves. At the same time, all Sons should be honoring and caring for the grave sites of these fallen heroes, not just on Memorial Day, but every day. If you would like to become part of the Grave Registration Task Force, please get in touch with the Department Grave Registration Officer Stephen Twining. If you have already been working on graves registration, please contact Brother Twining, so that efforts are not duplicated and the project can be coordinated properly.

Steve Twining can be contacted at 413-443-0080 or by Email: stevetwining@peoplepc.com

A Clarion Call huzzah goes out to Stephen Twining of Camp 15, Roy Henry and Frank Haley of Camp 18, Doug Jenkins of Camp 129, Reynaldo Rodriguez of Camp 25 and, of course, Dean Sargent of Camp 50, for their great efforts in registering Civil War graves. If you were missed, please let us know that you are out there. It takes an ARMY!

Charles H. Bond Camp 104 Celebrates A New Meeting Place and 100th Anniversary

Wakefield, MA: Charles H. Bond Camp No. 104 moved to a new headquarters at the Americal Civic Center, at 476 Main Street in Wakefield, MA. The move became official on March 30,2004. The Camp has moved between Malden and Melrose, and had originated in Saugus. It is now located in a former armory building, that has been recently renovated by the town. As the camp has grown steadily in the last few years with membership throughout the North Shore and beyond, the new location will be better accessible from all points in the area.

In related news, Charles H. Bond Camp No. 104 is celebrating its 100th anniversary year, and received a Congratulatory Citation from SUVCW Commander-in-Chief Kent Armstrong.

Camp 104's newest member, Joshu
a Bates, is initiated by his father, then Department Senior Vice Commander John Bates, as Camp SVC Rick Eccleston and

The Last Word

Let's keep the success of the 122nd Annual Department of Massachusetts Encampment going, and maintain a close bond within our brotherhood! Special thanks go out to those who attended, and hopefully more brothers will attend next year's 123rd Department Encampment!

G.A.R.

1866

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S.U.V.C.W.

1881

VISIT THE DEPARTMENT OF MASSACHUSETTS WEBSITE AT:

www.suvmass.org

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